The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news materials and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning it in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 MILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1629 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 1942 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 32, NO. 17

FACING *the* FACTS
With PHILIP PEARL

Spread the story, speed it onward, by word of mouth, in print and every other means of communication at your disposal—Labor For Victory is on the air!

Listen in yourself, get the members of your family to listen, tell your friends about it, help us get the largest possible audience for this program which gives the truth about the American worker and how he is helping his country to win the war.

There are five million members in the American Federation of Labor. If each one makes a date with his radio for this program and gets nine other people among his friends and relatives to do likewise, then we can achieve an audience of 50,000,000 Americans, almost half the national population. This sounds big but it can be done if each and every one of you helps out. It must be done for the good of America and the welfare of American workers.

The program runs only 15 minutes. It's not hard to take. In fact, we are working our heads off to make it really interesting and entertaining and we hope to get better and better as we go on.

To help you out we are printing the following box, giving full details on the when, where, what and why of this program. Cut it out and show to your friends. Urge them to tune in!

A Date For Saturday Night

You've got a standing date for Saturday night beginning May 2. Invite your family and friends. Every one is welcome.

The time is 10:15 to 10:30 P. M., Eastern War Time. That makes it 9:15 to 9:30 Central Time, 8:15 to 8:30 Mountain Time and 7:15 to 7:30 Pacific Time.

All you have to do at that time is to tune in your local station on the National Broadcasting Company's nation-wide red network. If you are in doubt as to which station that is in your own locality, look up the radio program listings in your daily newspaper. The program to look for is "Labor For Victory" at the time stated above.

And now for what's coming.

The program for May 2 is all set. Instead of asking labor leaders to talk about labor's contributions to the war program, we are asking three outstanding American employers to give their views. They are:

Percy G. Johnson, president of the Boeing Aircraft Company, which makes the famous Flying Fortresses and employs AFL union labor.

A. J. Higgins, president of Higgins Industries, Inc., which makes the equally famous torpedo boats and liberty landing craft and employs AFL union labor.

Peter W. Eller, a vice president of the Thompson-Starrett Company, Inc., leading construction contractor which has closed-shop agreements with the AFL building trades unions.

They have an interesting story to tell about management-labor teamwork. Don't miss it. Tell your own employer about it. He might learn something by listening.

All our Labor For Victory programs are not going to be talky-talky, although talk can be more interesting than anything else when the subject matter is important and well-presented.

We're going to have action on these programs, as well, and we may be able in the future to present some outstanding labor dramas on the air.

Now, you may ask, why are we getting excited about a 15-minute radio program?

The answer is that this program provides labor with its best opportunity in years of bringing home the truth about American workers to the American people.

We can't get our story told in the newspapers. The great majority of newspapers in this country are hostile to anti-labor views and the bias creeps into the news. The stories they print are so inadequate and distorted that the truth is almost always hidden. Some newspapers, in fact, have even embarked in active campaigns to suppress labor's rights and to destroy the standards of American workers.

So this radio program now offers labor a direct approach to the American people without support of labor policies is essential for their success.

The time on this program is provided free of charge as a public service by the National Broadcasting Company. We want to give America a real public service by presenting the truth, not propaganda.

The American Federation of Labor will be on the air every other Saturday night. On the alternate Saturday nights, the CIO takes over. We don't hesitate to urge you to listen to all of these programs and certainly don't fail to hear the AFL presentations, the next two of which come on May 2 and May 16. And let us know what you think of Labor For Victory.

Seamen Hit Plan To Smash Unions, Assail War Shipping Board

Washington, D. C.—The Seafarers International Union launched a vigorous attack against proposals by the War Shipping Administration which threaten to supersede existing collective bargaining agreements and to destroy seamen's unions.

The charges were made by Harry Lundeberg, president of the SIU, and John Hawk, head of the Atlantic and Gulf District. They pointed out that despite the fact that more than 500 members of the union have lost their lives in enemy submarine attacks, the organization is manning merchant ships in the Atlantic and Pacific without full crews.

The union officials particularly assailed proposals for establishing a "Maritime Personnel Board" which would do away with collective bargaining, disregard existing union contracts and set up Government hiring halls.

"What does all this mean?" Lundeberg and Hawk asked. "It means nothing else but the destruction of the seamen's unions. Besides being the most vicious setup and the latest deal yet attempted, it is so impractical it will not function."

The Seafarers Log, organ for the Atlantic and Gulf District of the SIU, branded the proposal as a scheme by labor-hating shipowners and Communist labor groups to "smash the unions." It charged that shipowners were "reaping their profit sheets in the American flag," are using the war as an excuse to destroy unions.

The War Shipping Administration, this newspaper said, guarantees the shipowner the continuance of his profits "but even goes further and undertakes to discipline and smash the labor unions for him."

Engel Warns End of 40-Hour Week Would Endanger Property Rights

Washington, D. C.—Suspension of the 40-hour week by law would nullify 210,000 existing union contracts in war industries, illegally deprive workers of their property rights under these contracts and endanger all property rights, Rep. Albert J. Engel of Michigan declared in a momentous address before the House of Representatives.

"The most important issue involved in the suspension of the thousands of union contracts," Rep. Engel said, "is not in the amount of dollars and cents involved, but in the fact that there is involved a fundamental principle on which our very Government is based.

"Every worker who has a contract through his union with his employer can recover against the employer in case the employer violated the contract.

"There is no doubt but what during the war emergency the Government can take any property right away from a citizen, but the Government must, under the Constitution, make it under due process of law and must compensate the worker or the citizen for the property right taken.

"This, however, would not solve the problem. Should the Government take that property right away from the worker and reimburse the worker for the loss out of the Treasury, we would be losing money instead of saving and simply relieves the employer of a part of his obligation in his contract with the employe.

"Frankly, what the proponents of this legislation are attempting to do—end the 40-hour week and time-and-a-half for overtime propose is to reduce the amount of compensation that the worker is obtaining under a contract that he has with his employer without consulting the worker for such reduction."

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Roosevelt Asks Lid On Prices, Profits And Wages In Sweeping War Plan To Control Living Costs; Tells Congress—Nix On Anti-Labor Proposals

Wage Stabilization

(The third point of President Roosevelt's program of action submitted to Congress to end inflation dealt with wage stabilization. The text of his message on this subject follows:)

In respect to the third item, seeking to stabilize remuneration for work, legislation is not required under present circumstances. I believe that stabilizing the cost of living will mean that wages in general can and should be kept at existing scales.

Organized labor has voluntarily given up its right to strike during the war. Therefore all stabilization or adjustment of wages will be settled by the War Labor Board machinery which has been generally accepted by industry and labor for the settlement of all disputes.

All strikes are at a minimum. Existing contracts between employers and employes must, in all fairness, be carried out to the expiration date of those contracts. The existing machinery for labor disputes will, of course, continue to give due consideration to inequalities and the elimination of substandards of living. I repeat that all of these processes, now in existence, will work equitably for the overwhelming proportion of all workers if we can keep the cost of living down and stabilize their remuneration.

Most workers in munition industries are working far more than 40 hours a week, and should continue to be paid at time and a half for overtime. Otherwise, their weekly pay envelopes would be reduced.

All these policies will guide all Government agencies.

Roosevelt Urges Nationwide Drive For Employment of Older Workers

Washington, D. C.—Proclaiming "National Emergency Week" for the week of May 3, President Roosevelt called on employers to give special attention to the hiring of veterans of the first World War and other men and women over 40 years of age because there was a place for them "in the gigantic war production program in which we are engaged." He urged Federal agencies to take special efforts to raise older workers for defense jobs.

Speaking of the veterans, the President said that it was "fitting to remember" that "many men who served in the armed forces in 1917 lost only can serve but are vitally needed in the ranks of agriculture and industry today."

"They had something to give in youth and valor then; they have something to give in experience and skill today," he said.

The President stated that it was not only patriotic but "sound business sense as well" to provide jobs for older workers because they had the assets of "work experience, stability and responsibility" which "we cannot afford to waste in this crisis."

He pointed out that the demands of the war production program would necessitate the employment of many new workers, both old and young, into the labor market to provide a sufficient labor supply.

He called on all churches, civic groups, chambers of commerce, boards of trade, veterans' organizations, industry, labor, public-spirited citizens, the press and the radio throughout the country to cooperate in the observance of "National Employment Week."

13,000 Hear Green Pledge Workers To Help Win War at Cleveland Rally

Cleveland, Ohio.—One hundred per cent determination to mobilize labor's full weight behind the one big job of "winning the war" was the wholehearted aim of the Cleveland Federation of Labor following the unparalleled success of its "Victory Ball."

Enthused by the words of AFL President William Green, who came here from Washington to address the rally, in which he declared, "As sure as a sun shines in the heavens, America and her Allies will win this war for freedom," 13,000 Cleveland trade unionists immediately into an appeal "for the working men of Cleveland and throughout the nation to make good our no-strike promise to the President and the Government."

Declaring his enthusiasm at the size of the gathering, Mr. Green said he regarded the crowd as proof of the "full and complete support of labor in Cleveland in furtherance of the war effort."

"Stop making war on labor. Stand with us. Stand with us in making war on our common enemy," was the AFL executive's appeal to "our wartime enemies in Congress."

Reading a recent telegram from Gen. MacArthur, sent in answer to an AFL production plea, Mr. Green quoted the hero of the Philippines as saying, "Labor has never failed the Army of the nation. May God bless you for your splendid patriotism."

"What a contradiction to those in Congress who are attempting to rob labor of its rights," he said. "We say now that we shall continue our fight against anti-labor legislation to the bitter end. And when we go to the ballot box we shall remember our enemies in Congress."

Green Asks Central Labor Unions To Get Voice On Rationing Boards

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green urged all Central Labor Unions to obtain adequate representation on local rationing boards. His letter follows:

"Labor in your locality should have representation on your community rationing board. Your local defense council or some other agency approved by the Office of Price Administration has been instructed to nominate that board representatives of unions, housewives, farmers, educators, business and professional men. The board is responsible for carrying out rationing orders and policies determined by Washington.

"Orders issued by czars and tires have been in effect for some time. Sugar is next in order. Rationing is necessary in order to save materials for war purposes. The Office of Price Administration, from prices of scarce commodities and regulates what each person may buy instead of letting buyers bid up prices so that only the wealthy can buy. This order should be generously enforced, benefiting all alike. In order that workers and their families may be fairly and adequately represented in the rationing of goods which they use, your organization should insist upon representation if you do not already have it.

"Orders issued by the Office of Price Administration state that representation on the board shall be in accord with the demands of the community, so if you encounter difficulties in getting adequate representation for labor, write me, and I will take the matter up with the Office of Price Administration."

HALF OF WORKERS PAID LESS THAN $30 A WEEK

Washington, D. C.—Half of the workers in the U. S. manufacturing establishments earn less than $30 a week, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins reported.

Workers in war industries earned slightly more than workers in all manufacturing establishments, the weekly wage averaging $37.

FDR Pleased By Progress In War Production, Scoffs At "Loafing"

Washington, D. C.—A glowing picture of expanding war production throughout the nation was painted by President Roosevelt at his press conference.

He said that America's gigantic production goals, considered fantastic when first announced last January, are now well on the road to completion.

In fact, the President said such encouraging progress has been made that the Government now intends to raise its sights and increase the production quota for the coming fiscal year from 56 billion dollars to perhaps 70 billion dollars.

The only important war industry where there have been noticeable production lags, the President indicated, is in shipbuilding. This has not been due to loafing by labor, as some in Congress have charged, but because of shortages in steel plate.

Commenting on the testimony of Admiral Emory S. Land, chairman of the War Shipping Administration, before the Senate Investigating Committee, the President cheerfully said Land's charges of "loafing" in shipyards would prove a good burr under the tail of both management and labor.

Actually, he added, he does not believe loafing is responsible for any substantial part of the shipbuilding lag and, as a general conclusion, he does not consider it of great importance, since the real reason for delay has been shortage of material.

FIRST AIDERS GRADUATE AT AFL HEADQUARTERS

Washington, D. C.—AFL headquarters here is now plentifully equipped with first-aid experts. Thirty-one employes took the standard course and all of them graduated with flying colors. Members of the class, including eleven air raid wardens, will receive certificates from the American Red Cross. Miss Mary Lyne served as instructor.

Represented in the group are employes from the staffs of President Green, the Secretary-Treasurer Meany, Research, Publicity and Bookkeeping departments of the AFL, the Union Label and Building Trades Departments, and the International Offices of Firefighters, Bookbinders, Technical Engineers and Letter Carriers.

GREEN URGES AFL MEMBERS GIVE BLOOD TO RED CROSS

Washington, D. C.—President William Green urged "every able-bodied member" of the American Federation of Labor to give a pint of blood to the American Red Cross Blood Donor Service. He said this vital donation is necessary to save the lives of the men at the front.

At the same time, a request by the Army and Navy for 1,500,000 additional 350,000 units of plasma, (each equivalent to a pint of whole blood) was announced by Chairman Charles H. Davis of the Red Cross. Numerous group donations have been made by unions in the 187 cities where the Blood Donor Centers are located, Red Cross officials report.

LABOR'S AID PLEDGED IN WAR BOND CAMPAIGN

Washington, D. C.—Leaders of organized labor pledged to the Treasury Department in a nationwide broadcast with Secretary Morgenthau and leaders of industry, that their members would do all within their power to achieve and better the 10 per cent of payroll quota figure set for the nation in the billion dollar month War Bond Campaign.

Speaking on behalf of the American Federation of Labor, President Green pointed out that the AFL launched its own billion dollar Bond drive two months ago, and that $200,000,000 had already been subscribed. "We are confident we can up with the 10 per cent quota, he declared.

"This is a voluntary program, and thoroughly American," he said. "We do not need compulsion and coercion such as exists in Germany. Our people have their hearts and souls in this war and will not hold back with their money. To every member of the AFL I say—Put yourself on this 10 per cent War Bond quota at least and stick to it for the duration."

Indicates WLB May Grant Pay Boosts To Correct Inequalities and Lift Sub-Standard Rates

Washington, D. C.—President Roosevelt, in a sweeping message to Congress, charted a program of lean living for America for the duration of the war.

The President offered a seven-point plan, designed to place the nation on a full war basis and to keep the cost of living within bounds even though that means "our standard of living must come down."

He asked:

1—Heavy taxes on profits.
2—A $25,000 limit on all incomes after payment of taxes.
3—Stabilization of wages at present levels.
4—Establishment of strict price ceilings.
5—Rationing of scarce commodities.
6—Reduction of farm prices to parity.
7—Curtailment of credit and installment buying.

The President firmly rejected pending anti-labor legislation and proposals for compulsory savings, calling instead for large-scale voluntary purchasing of war savings bonds.

His recommendations for wage stabilization were broad and general in nature. It is expected that he will elaborate and explain his views in this respect in a radio address to the nation and, perhaps, in a communication to the War Labor Board. Labor leaders, therefore, withheld comment pending disclosure of further details.

In his message to Congress, the President said that legislation is not required under present circumstances to stabilize remuneration for work. Stabilizing the cost of living, he suggested, will mean that wages in general "can and should be kept at existing scales."

He revealed that all stabilization or adjustment of wages will be settled by the War Labor Board's machinery "which has been generally accepted by industry and labor for the settlement of all disputes."

Indicating that all wage increases will not be banned, the President said that existing union contracts with employers must, in all fairness, be carried out to the expiration date, and that the War Labor Board "will, of course, continue to give due consideration to inequalities and the elimination of substandards of living."

"All strikes are at a minimum," the President declared. He also pointed out that organized labor has voluntarily given up its right to strike during the war. These statements were taken to mean that the President would oppose any compulsory anti-strike legislation.

The President also defended the 40-hour week and overtime standards. He said:

"Most workers in munitions industries are working far more than forty hours a week and should continue to be paid at time and a half for overtime. Otherwise, their weekly pay envelopes would be reduced.

This pronouncement was regarded as the death-blow to pending legislation for abolition of the 40-hour week.

On the subject of rationing, the President said:

"It is obviously fair that where there is not enough of any essential commodity to go around all citizens at reasonable prices, those who can afford to pay more for the commodity should not be privileged over those who cannot. I am confident that as to many basic necessities of life rationing will not be necessary because we shall strive to the utmost to have an adequate supply. But where any important article becomes scarce, rationing is the democratic, equitable solution."

The President stressed the thought in his message that if prices are stabilized and the cost of living kept from spiraling upward, conditions will be fair and just to the "overwhelming proportion of American workers, even though pay increases will be denied them."

In his conclusion the President said:

"Some have called this an 'economy of sacrifice.' Some interepret it in terms that are more accurate—the 'equality of sacrifice.'

"I have never been able to bring myself, however, to full acceptance of the word 'sacrifice,' because free men and women, bred in the concepts of democracy and wedded to the principles of democracy, deem it a privilege rather than a sacrifice to work and to fight for the preservation of the democratic ideal. It is, therefore, more true to call this total effort of the American people an 'equality of privilege.'

"I firmly believe that Americans all will welcome this opportunity to share in the fight of civilized mankind to preserve decency and dignity in modern life. For this is fundamentally a people's war—and it must be followed by a people's peace.

"The achievement of victory in war and security in peace requires the participation of all the people in the common effort for our common cause."

Davis Explodes War Strike Myth, Shutdowns Sharply Cut Since War

Washington, D. C.—The strike myth was exploded by Chairman William H. Davis of the War Labor Board.

Since the war, shutdowns in vital production industries have been relatively negligible, he declared. During the first quarter of this year, strike idleness in war industries was only one-fifteenth of time lost in the same period last year, he revealed.

Even these figures don't give the true picture of uninterrupted war production, because they include one of the two biggest strikes listed for March even though that strike took place in New Orleans laundries and involved no war effort on the Navy, and a dispute of the Maritime Commission, the War Production Board, and the War Labor Board.

"From now on there will be one official list of strikes affecting the war," Davis said. "The new plan for coordinating all strike data into a single list has been adopted to end the confusion of the past and to give the public a clear picture."

WLB Joins Labor Chiefs In Attack On Open Shop Campaign of N.A.M.

Washington, D. C.—The entire War Labor Board—including its four industry representatives — united in condemning the anti-union attitude of the National Association of Manufacturers.

In a unanimous declaration, the WLB accused N.A.M. President William P. Witherow of mis-stating the facts when he denied he and other industry representatives had signed an agreement that all disputes, including those over the union shop, are a proper matter for consideration by the WLB.

The Board fully backed up the joint stand taken by AFL President William Green and CIO President Philip Murray. The labor leaders issued a statement refuting out that the agreement referred to had been entered with President Roosevelt on Dec. 23. They added:

"We are forced to conclude that Mr. Witherow, by denying he was a party to such an agreement and by advocating at this time the freezing of the open shop, by law, has broken faith with President Roosevelt."